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## Comments on Stanislaus County Community Services and Supports Plan

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A few preliminary comments: Overall, we agreed that this is a very good plan. It addresses the issue of transformation throughout the document. There are several expansions of existing full service programs that align with the goals of the Mental Health Services Act. There were clear indications of collaboration throughout the process and throughout the plan.

The committee was pleased to see the County leverage the new dollars with existing funds to transform the mental health system; this leveraging occurred on several of the new programs with hopes for a better set of outcomes. Additionally, the County proposed several innovative programs that show great promise. Finally, the plan addressed the need to eliminate stigma by offering services and programs at nontraditional sites.

A few shortcomings were noted. Early in the document, Stanislaus County noted that the Stanislaus Community Services Agency Child Welfare Services opted not participate in the 163 Wraparound Program because of the availability of other well-developed collaborative resources. It is not clear whether this decision was made prior to or after the passage of Proposition 63, or whether the decision was made independently by Child Welfare Services or made in consultation with the Department of Mental Health. The Mental Health Services Act is very specific in its requirement that all counties implement Wraparound services pursuant to W & I Code Section 18850, or provide substantial evidence that it is not feasible for the County to do so. According the Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, "feasible" means "capable of being done or carried out." The County has not provided substantial evidence that it is not feasible for them to develop a Wraparound project that is consistent with program requirements found in W & I Code Sections 18250-18252. The committee is not persuaded that counties should be allowed to circumvent their obligations to develop 163 programs. In a couple of places, the county suggested that neighboring counties would offer services; the committee notes that treatment outside the county is rarely a successful strategy. Finally, the county did not adequately consult with the Native American population; the committee notes that this important population does reside in the region and must be consulted with and served.

**Westside Homeless Outreach Program**—expanding a good and successful 134 program to reduce homelessness, reduce incarcerations, and reduce the need for emergency medical services. Targeting this high-risk population is essential in addressing serious needs in the communities. The committee was interested in hearing about what specific steps the county would take to find this population.

**Juvenile Justice Full Service Partnership Program**—a new component and expansion of a successful program to reduce recidivism, reduce out of home placement, and reduce

homelessness. This program will prevent larger adult programs in the future. In next year's plan, the committee would like to see the role of law enforcement better defined. We would also like to see Native American populations included in the collaborative process.

**Senior Access and Resource Team**—new full service program with a comprehensive range of services reduce problems common to older adults. The committee noted the integration of drug and alcohol programs and other health care providers to address co-occurring disorders. The committee was pleased to see the desire of the county to make permanent of successful demonstration project; this is moving toward transformation.

**Health/Mental Health High Risk Team**—the program creates a new, innovative program to provide integrated services to clients who have serious mental illness and significant co-occurring health conditions. This program is intensely collaborative and innovative with a nice feature of peer support groups to help clients heal themselves. The program pairs clients with culturally competent providers. The committee suggests that inclusion of Native Americans in the group of stakeholders consulted and clients served. There was mention that neighboring counties could serve this population; the committee believes that relying on other counties to provide services does not work. A viable option would be to have the native health clinic in nearby Tuolumne participate in this important collaborative.

**Integrated Forensic Team**—a creative partnership with the Drug Court program to make case management services available to consumers with co-occurring disorders. This innovative approach will deal with the issues in a population that the county is not currently serving well. This is a great approach.

**Transition Age Young Adult Drop-In Center**—an expansion of a successful AB 2034 TAY program, which provides full services to underserved consumers. This approach addresses the reduction of stigma, but offering services and linkages to services at a safe haven. The committee thinks this program is headed in the right direction. Again, the committee suggests the inclusion of Native Americans in the group of stakeholders consulted and clients served.

**Community Response Team**—this is an existing crisis intervention program that will morph into a new mobile crisis response unit with an emphasis on peer support, recovery and resiliency. Moves services out of the traditional clinic setting. A good example of leveraging new dollars with existing dollars to transform the system; this is a broad system redesign. Again, the committee suggests the inclusion of Native Americans in the group of stakeholders consulted and clients served.

**Garden Gate Respite Intermediate Program**—an expansion of an existing respite housing center with a new component for an intermediate stay. It provides short-term respite services and is a link for engagement of “hard to reach” individuals. It will serve as a link to other AB 2034 programs. There was a question relating to which population will be served: men and women? The committee noted that there is a high level of

collaboration in this program. Again, the committee suggests the inclusion of Native Americans in the group of stakeholders consulted and clients served.

**Families Together**—an enhancement and expansion of an existing center. This program merges new funds with existing funds to improve and expand supports and services for youth with serious emotional disturbances and their families. There is a focus on clients and families. It addresses the needs of the entire family. The committee noted that this is a very innovative approach. Again, the committee suggests the inclusion of Native Americans in the group of stakeholders consulted and clients served.

**Consumer Employment and Empowerment Center**—a transformation and expansion of an existing program. This program will be for all consumer and family organization and eventually will be staffed by consumers. A strong recovery and strength-based approach will be used consistently. This innovative program is “one stop shopping” with linkages to services; it leverages existing funds with new funds to transform the system. Again, the committee suggests the inclusion of Native Americans in the group of stakeholders consulted and clients served.

**Outreach and Engagement Services**—a partnership with a variety CBO’s will be utilized to provide outreach and engagement to individuals with serious mental illness and serious emotional disturbances. This program has the potential to be transformative.

The committee would like to see a discussion of three items in the next plan. On a going forward basis, it will be important to know where we have been. There is a need to get a baseline of services and populations served so that outcomes can be measured. The County should take special efforts to count its homeless population and the jail population with mental illness, along with other criminal justice substance abuse, health and housing measures of transformation. The second discussion should be on measurable outcomes, i.e., which of these programs are accomplishing the ambitious goals outlined in the plan. Finally, what is the county doing to develop and train its workforce.